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Clinton, MD Man Pleads Guilty to Multiple Armed Bank Robberies

WASHINGTON - A 26-year-old Clinton, Maryland man, Dewayne A. Edwards, has pled guilty to three counts of Armed Bank Robbery and one count of Using, Carrying, or Possessing a Firearm During and in Relation to a Crime of Violence, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor, FBI Assistant Director in Charge Joseph Persichini, Jr., and MPD Chief Cathy L. Lanier, announced today.

Edwards entered his guilty plea today in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. If the plea is ultimately accepted by the Court at the time of sentencing before the Honorable Emmet G. Sullivan, Edwards faces a likely sentencing guidelines range of 121 to 151 months' imprisonment on the armed bank robbery charges, and a consecutive sentence of 7 years' imprisonment on the weapons charge.

The defendant admitted during the plea proceeding that on April 7, 2008, he and a female accomplice entered the Adams National Bank, located at 1729 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C., both armed with pistols. Upon entering the bank, the defendant, who was wearing a fake beard, and his accomplice, whose face was covered, pointed their pistols at the bank employees, while physically grabbing two of them, and ordered the employees into the vault. Once inside the vault, the defendant and his accomplice instructed the bank manager to open the safe in the vault and to place the money in a bag that the defendant's accomplice was holding. Edwards threatened to shoot the bank employees several times during the robbery. The bank employees placed approximately \$103,085 into the bag, along with a dye pack. Edwards ordered the bank employees to bend down or get down on the floor, which they did. He and the female accomplice then left the bank.

Witnesses saw the defendant and his accomplice leave the bank, enter a four-door, burgundy-colored Buick with a Maryland license tag number, and drive away. Later that same day, a citizen reported a suspicious vehicle located in an alley a short distance from the bank. The citizen indicated that a large sum of dye-stained money was visible in the vehicle. The FBI Washington Field Office Evidence Response Team (ERT) responded to the area and located the vehicle, which had been reported stolen a few days earlier. Visible in the passenger side of the vehicle was a large amount of dye-stained money. On the ground next to the driver's side door, ERT located and recovered an item that resembled a fake beard.

The FBI Laboratory in Quantico, Virginia, subsequently determined that a DNA profile found on the fake beard matched the known DNA profile of the defendant.

On August 28, 2008, the defendant returned to the same Adams National Bank, again armed with a pistol. Upon entering the bank, the defendant, who was wearing a blue poncho, drew the pistol, announced a robbery and directed the bank's employees to raise their hands and go to the bank vault. He ordered the bank employees to open the vault, then he took \$12,000 out of the vault and placed it in a blue bag. Edwards told the bank employees to sit down and stay seated or he would shoot them. He then left the bank. In a subsequent search of the defendant's residence in Clinton, Maryland, on November 14, 2008, law enforcement officers recovered a poncho and bag similar in style, color and appearance to the poncho worn and the bag carried by defendant during this bank robbery.

On September 29, 2008, the defendant entered the National Capital Bank, located at 5228 44th Street, NW, Washington, D.C., once more armed with a pistol. The defendant, whose face was partially covered by a black and white bandana, pointed the pistol at the bank manager and asked who had the key to the vault. After ordering the tellers to open the door leading to the teller stations and directing the employees and customer to get down on the floor, the defendant took the bank manager to the vault and ordered the manager to hand him money from the vault. The defendant obtained \$27,060 from the vault and from a teller drawer and placed it into a bag. Upon leaving the bank, the defendant ran toward the back of the bank.

ERT processed the crime scene and found a black and white bandana in the rear parking lot adjacent to the bank. The FBI Laboratory subsequently determined that a DNA profile found on the bandana is consistent with the known DNA profile of defendant. In the November 14, 2008 search of the defendant's residence, law enforcement agents also recovered three firearms, including a nine millimeter caliber Ruger that is similar in style, color and appearance to the gun brandished by defendant in each of these armed bank robberies.

____ In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Taylor, FBI Assistant Director in Charge Persichini, and MPD Chief Lanier commended the excellent work of the investigators in the case, particularly FBI Special Agent Mike Pinto and MPD Detective Dick Hamilton of the Bank Robbery Squad, the FBI's Violent Crimes Task Force and Evidence Response Team, and the personnel at the FBI Laboratory in Quantico, Virginia. They also commended Investigator Duncan Templeton and Legal Assistant Priscilla Hutson for their extensive assistance in this case, Assistant U.S. Attorney Rob Hur of the U.S. Attorney's Office in the District of Maryland for his assistance in obtaining the search warrant for the defendant's residence, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Angela Schmidt, who is prosecuting the case.

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